

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for measuring and analyzing store performance comprising:

collecting transaction data of store sales activity, utilizing a plurality of available data sources, the data comprising two or more of field performance data, external data, and legacy data, and training data, and including customer visit count data, the collected transaction data being indicative of store performance factors;

analyzing the collected transaction data with a computer processor to compute an aggregate synopsis of performance of a store employee as a subject under observation;

hypothesizing using the aggregate synopsis, said hypothesizing developing a hypothesis for store improvement, the hypothesis determining at least one of a plurality of recommended actions for application to the subject under observation;

applying the determined recommended actions to the subject under observation; and
measuring a change in the store performance as a result of the subject under observation
applying the determined recommended actions,

wherein the field performance data includes data indicative of at least one of sales per hour (SPH), dollars per transaction (DPT), units per transaction (UPT), transactions per hour (TPH), traffic conversion percentage, customer traffic count, and periodic goals,

wherein the hypothesizing is performed with an expert system, and

wherein the store performance factors include one or more of gross sales, return sales, net sales, sales goals, dollars per transaction, and number of transactions.

2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein measuring a change in store performance further comprises repeating the collecting, analyzing, hypothesizing, and applying in an iterative manner.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein hypothesizing further comprises:
comparing the aggregate synopsis to performance scores within a predetermined performance range; and
mapping the aggregate synopsis to the plurality of recommended actions based on the predetermined performance range.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein comparing further comprises providing a set of performance standards, each of the performance standards corresponding to at least a portion of the aggregate synopsis, the performance standards for determining a ranking within the predetermined performance range.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 wherein ~~the subject under observation further comprises a sales employee, the sales~~ the store employee having has a plurality of levels and ~~the~~ performance standards defined for each of the plurality of levels.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 wherein the performance standards correspond to a subset of a predetermined set of customer focused skills attained by the sales store employee.
7. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the performance standards further comprise a scaling matrix operable to scale the performance scores, the scaling matrix having scaling factors corresponding to store characteristics pertinent to the transaction data.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the scaling factors further comprise store volume, store location, and timing.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3 further comprising setting timely performance goals corresponding to the subject under observation, and adjusting the predetermined performance range in response to the performance goals.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein setting the timely performance goals further comprises setting goals according to at least one of daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and yearly intervals.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 further comprising establishing a staffing profile operable to attain the timely performance goal, the staffing profile indicative of optimal staffing levels for each of the sales store employee levels.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~the field performance data further includes data indicative of at least one of sales per hour (SPH), dollars per transaction (DPT), units per transaction (UPT), transactions per hour (TPH), traffic conversion percentage, customer traffic count, and periodic goals~~ a store, instead of a store employee, is the subject under observation and to whom the determined recommended actions are applied.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the external and legacy data further includes at least one of administrative data, accounting data, tax data, market research data, merchandise grouping data, human resource data, and store revenue goal data.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the aggregate synopsis further comprises report results corresponding to quantitative data.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the transaction data corresponds to retail stores and sales employees.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein applying the determined recommended actions further comprises skill development at a sales employee level and business scenarios and

strategies at a store level.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the hypothesizing further comprises hypothesizing business scenarios and the recommended actions comprise strategies to improve business operations and staffing profiles for increased sales.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the staffing profile further comprises an optimal aggregation of sales employees of different skill levels.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer system for analyzing employee and store performance comprising:

a transactional data store operable to store transactional data of store sales activity from a plurality of available data sources including field performance data, external ~~data~~, and legacy data~~[[,]]~~ and training data, the stored transactional data being indicative of performance of a store and performance of a store employee as a subject under observation;

an analysis engine coupled to receive the transactional data from the data store, the analysis engine operable to compute an aggregate synopsis of performance of the subject under observation from the transactional data; and

a hypothesizer responsive to the analysis engine and operable to develop a hypothesis for store improvement and to determine at least one recommended action for the subject under observation from the aggregate synopsis, the at least one recommended actions directed to improving the performance of the store,

wherein the field performance data includes data indicative of at least one of sales per hour (SPH), dollars per transaction (DPT), units per transaction (UPT), transactions per hour (TPH), traffic conversion percentage, customer traffic count, and periodic goals,

wherein the hypothesizer comprises an expert system, and

wherein the store performance is measured by one or more of gross sales, return sales, net sales, sales goals, dollars per transaction, and number of transactions.

21. (Original) The system of claim 20 further comprising a feedback mechanism for monitoring the recommended actions and gathering, in an iterative manner, additional transactional data indicative of an effect of the implemented recommended actions.

22. (Original) The system of claim 20 further comprising a security schema operable to provide selective access to the transactional data, selective access determined as a function of a need to know and of a user's store management role within the sales organization.

23. (Original) The system of claim 20 further comprising a learning center adapted to implement the determined recommended actions.

24. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 21 wherein the feedback mechanism is further operable to monitor an advancement cycle of a sales store employee based on the gathered transactional data and a management certification.

25. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 20 further comprising a plurality of transactional data systems operable to gather the transactional data.

26. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the transactional data store further comprises a database adapted to store a plurality of normalized data records and a knowledge base adapted to store aggregated data having a plurality of granularity levels.

27. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the analysis engine is further operable to generate a plurality of performance scores, each of the performance scores adapted to be compared to a predetermined performance range.

28. (Original) The system of claim 27 wherein the hypothesizer is further operable to receive the predetermined performance range, and compare the performance scores to the predetermined performance range.

29. (Original) The system of claim 28 wherein the hypothesizer further comprises a mapper operable to determine a recommended action based on the comparing by mapping the aggregate synopsis to at least one of a plurality of the recommended actions.

30. (Original) The system of claim 28 wherein the hypothesizer is further operable to determine a ranking in the performance range and map the ranking into a predetermined list of recommended actions.

31. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 20 wherein the subject under observation further comprises a sales store employee having a level, wherein the level corresponds to a set of defined performance standards.

32. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 31 further comprising a predetermined set of customer-focused skills corresponding to the level of the sales store employee.

33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 31 further comprising a scaling matrix operable to scale the performance standards, the scaling matrix having scaling factors corresponding to store characteristics pertinent to the transaction data.

34. (Original) The system of claim 33 wherein the scaling factors further comprise store volume, store location, and timing.

35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 27 further comprising timely performance goals corresponding to the subject under observation, and adjusting the predetermined performance range in response to the performance goals.

36. (Original) The system of claim 35 wherein the timely performance goals further comprises periodic intervals according to at least one of hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and

yearly intervals.

37. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the hypothesizer is further operable to provide output indicative of optimal staffing profiles.

38. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the hypothesizer further comprises an operator for manual inspection of the computed aggregate synopsis.

39. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 20 wherein ~~the hypothesizer further comprises an expert system~~ a store, instead of a store employee, is the subject under observation and for whom the at least one recommended actions is determined.

40. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~39~~ 20 wherein the expert system is further operable for qualitative analysis.

41. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the plurality of recommended actions further correspond to a library of multimedia solutions, the multimedia solutions adapted to provide educational development of skill and knowledge.

42. (Original) The system of claim 41 wherein the multimedia solutions further comprise a curricula of educational coursework materials.

43. (Original) The system of claim 41 wherein the multimedia solutions further comprise interactive and passive delivery and feedback mediums including magnetic, optical, and printed materials.

44. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the analysis engine is further operable to compute quantitative data and the hypothesizer is operable to generate qualitative conclusions.

45. (Withdrawn) A method for gathering, transforming, analyzing, and presenting sales productivity data to generate remedial conclusions comprising:

gathering transactional data from a plurality of sources, the transactional data indicative of a level of performance of a subject under observation;

storing the transactional data in a normalized form operable to be accessed by analytical processes;

translating the stored transactional data into an aggregated form, the aggregated form adapted to be accessed at a plurality of granularity levels;

computing a report indicative of the performance of a subject under observation, the computing performed by invoking the stored transactional data;

retrieving a predetermined range corresponding to the report, the predetermined range having a plurality of performance levels;

comparing the computed report to the predetermined range to determine a ranking within the predetermined range;

mapping the ranking into a predetermined list of recommended actions, the recommended actions adapted to improve the performance of the subject under observation;

applying the mapped recommended actions to the subject under observation; and

reevaluating the subject under observation to determine the applicability of the recommended actions.

46. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 45 wherein reevaluating further comprises remeasuring the data and recomputing the ranking.

47. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 46 wherein remeasuring further comprises repeating the gathering, storing, translating, computing, retrieving, and analyzing in an iterative manner.

48. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 45 wherein the subject under observation is an employee.

49. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 45 wherein the transaction data corresponds to a retail organization.
50. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 45 wherein the aggregated form of the transactional data is a multidimensional form operable for analysis at a variety of granularity levels.
51. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 45 wherein the performance levels include low, medium, and high.
52. (Withdrawn) A decision support system for gathering, transforming, and analyzing, transactional data to generate remedial conclusions comprising:
- at least one transactional data system operable to collect and generate transactional data indicative of a level of performance of a subject under observation;
 - a transactional database operable to store the transactional data in a normalized form operable to be accessed by analytical processes;
 - a knowledge base operable to receive a translation of at least a subset of the transactional data and further operable to store the transactional data in an aggregated form, the aggregated form adapted to be accessed at a plurality of granularity levels;
 - a data analysis engine operable to compute a report indicative of the performance of a subject under observation, the computing including accessing the stored transactional data from the database and the knowledge base;
 - a statistical classifier operable to compute a predetermined range corresponding to the reports, the predetermined range having a plurality of performance levels;
 - a hypothesizer adapted to compare the computed report to the predetermined range to determine a ranking within the predetermined range;
 - a mapper operable to map the ranking into a predetermined list of recommended actions, the recommended actions adapted to improve the level of performance;
 - a learning center adapted to apply the mapped recommended actions to the subject under test; and

a feedback coupling operable to reevaluate the subject under test to determine the result of the recommended actions.

53. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 52 wherein the database is a relational database.

54. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 52 wherein the knowledge base is a multidimensional database operable for analytical processing.

55. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 52 wherein the reports further include predetermined reports.

56. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 52 wherein the reports further comprise a plurality of fields, each of the fields having a corresponding performance range.

57. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 52 wherein the predetermined list of recommended actions further comprises a classification of the subject under test, and an enumeration of the predetermined ranges.

58. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 52 wherein the mapping is performed via a matrix comprising a classification of the subject under test, an enumeration of the predetermined ranges, and a score correlating the predetermined ranges to the ranking.

59. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 52 wherein the feedback coupling is further operable to reinitiate the collecting and gathering of transactional data in an iterative manner.

60. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for improving store productivity comprising:

gathering transaction data of store sales activity from a plurality of available computer data sources, the data including at least one of external ~~data~~, and legacy data, field performance

data, and training data, and including sales activity corresponding to at least one employee;
analyzing the gathered transaction data with a computer processor to determine a ranking of employee performance, the gathered transaction data indicative of revenue generation and skill proficiency of each of the at least one employee;
defining a set of recommended actions directed at improving store productivity as a function of the at least one employee's skill proficiency and revenue generation;
correlating the ranking with the set of recommended actions for the at least one employee;
implementing, based on the correlating, at least one of the recommended actions; and
measuring productivity improvement of the store resulting from the implementing of the at least one recommended actions by the at least one employee,
wherein the field performance data includes data indicative of at least one of sales per hour (SPH), dollars per transaction (DPT), units per transaction (UPT), transactions per hour (TPH), traffic conversion percentage, customer traffic count, and periodic goals,
wherein defining a set of recommended actions is performed by an expert system, and
wherein the productivity improvement of the store is measured by one or more of gross sales, return sales, net sales, sales goals, dollars per transaction, and number of transactions.

61. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein measuring further comprises repeating the gathering and analyzing.

62. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 further comprising iterating through the gathering, analyzing, correlating, and implementing, and tracking the results over time.

63. (Original) The method of claim 60 further comprising:

defining a staffing profile indicative of an optimal combination of employees based on the performance data;

implementing the staffing profile, wherein measuring further comprises measuring revenue generation in response to the implemented staffing profile.

64. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for assessing, and improving the performance of a store comprising:

gathering, via a sales transactional data interface, from a plurality of available computer data sources, at least one of field performance data, legacy data, training data, and transactional data, the gathered data indicative of the revenue generating performance of at least one subject employee;

aggregating and storing, via a data store, the gathered transactional data;

generating, via an analysis engine having a processor, quantitative reports indicative of aggregate revenue generating performance of ~~each of the~~ at least one subject employee;

determining, based on the quantitative reports and a performance range, a performance ranking corresponding to ~~each of the~~ at least one subject employee;

identifying, via a hypothesizer for improving store performance, areas for improvement for ~~each the~~ at least one subject employee based on the performance ranking;

mapping, via a qualitative mapping engine, the identified areas for improvement into a predetermined list of recommended actions for the at least one employee, the recommended actions for at least improving proficiency of skills;

implementing, via a learning center, the mapped recommended actions by the at least one employee; and

measuring, via subsequently gathered transactional data, the effect of the mapped recommended actions on the revenue generating performance of the ~~employees at least one employee~~ and the store,

wherein the field performance data includes data indicative of at least one of sales per hour (SPH), dollars per transaction (DPT), units per transaction (UPT), transactions per hour (TPH), traffic conversion percentage, customer traffic count, and periodic goals,

wherein the hypothesizer comprises a rule-based expert system, and

wherein the effect on the revenue generating performance is measured by one or more of gross sales, return sales, net sales, sales goals, dollars per transaction, and number of transactions.

65. (Previously presented) The method of claim 64 wherein the transactional data further comprises sales data, and customer flow data.

66. (Canceled)

67. (Original) The method of claim 64 wherein the qualitative mapping engine further comprises a predetermined correlation of a type of employee, the performance ranking and the recommended actions.

68. (Original) The method of claim 67 wherein the predetermined correlation corresponds to a matrix.

69. (Original) The method of claim 64 further comprising:

defining a staffing profile indicative of an optimal combination of employee types, based on the performance data, the optimal combination including the skills of each employee; and
implementing the staffing profile, wherein measuring further comprises measuring revenue generation in response to the implemented staffing profile.

70. (Canceled)

71. (Original) The method of claim 64 wherein the learning center further comprises a library of multimedia curriculum.

72. (Original) The method of claim 64 wherein the transaction data is retail sales data.

73. (Canceled)

74. (Canceled)

75. (Currently Amended) A system for analyzing employee and store performance data comprising:

means for utilizing a plurality of available computer generated data and gathering therefrom sales transaction data indicative of store performance factors;

means for analyzing the gathered sales transaction data to compute an aggregate synopsis of performance of a store employee as a subject under observation;

means for hypothesizing the improvement in store performance based on the computed aggregate synopsis, said hypothesizing means further determining at least one of a plurality of recommended actions to be applied to the subject under observation;

means for applying the determined recommended actions to the subject under observation; and

means for measuring a change in the performance of the store as a result of application of the determined recommended actions,

wherein the sales transaction data includes data indicative of at least one of sales per hour (SPH), dollars per transaction (DPT), units per transaction (UPT), transactions per hour (TPH), traffic conversion percentage, customer traffic count, and periodic goals,

wherein the means for hypothesizing comprises an expert system, and

wherein the change in the performance of the store is measured by one or more of gross sales, return sales, net sales, sales goals, dollars per transaction, and number of transactions.